

69th Chem Co. mechanic keeps tracks rolling

Story and Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Bell. DIVARTY PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- With a 3,000-pound diesel engine hovering only inches above her head, Pfc. Eva Hodge, 19, from Oakdale Calif., vigorously tugs on the wrench to loosen a bolt that will allow herself and fellow mechanics to remove the vital part to repair another disabled tracked vehicle.

That vehicle will keep the 69th Chemical Company, based in Hanau, Germany, moving forward to support the 1st Armored Division Artillery Combat team in southern Baghdad.

"She's just one of the guys and fits right in," Spc. Shannon McFarlane, 22, from Green Bay, Wisc., said while watching Hodge struggle with the wrench to remove the fuel pump on the large V-6, 212-horsepower Detroit Engine that powers the M1059/A3 smoke generator carrier.

"But you know what? She's an awesome mechanic, and I have never seen someone work so hard to accomplish the mission."

Whether it's the early-morning hours making final adjustments to an engine or the late nights using vehicle lights to illuminate the work area while maneuvering the bulky engine blocks in and out of the close-fitting engine compartments, Hodge's perseverance and desire to shatter stereotypes in a predominantly male occupational skill, sets her aside from the other generator and light-wheel vehicle mechanics.

With her fingers noticeably worn from months of working in arduous mechanical environment and her fingernails seemingly permanently covered in grease and grime, Hodge said she takes pride that she's not like other females.

"She gets dirty and doesn't mind having her nails full of grease," McFarlane said. "It's just the way she is. I know, for a fact, she would keep things rolling around here."

Brought up in California, she said, joining the Army was something no one was prepared for.

"Definitely, no one ever expected to me to sign up for the Army, let alone being a track mechanic," Hodge said laughing. "Everyone thought I was just a normal girl."

For the past 19 months, this not-so-normal mechanic has been busy working with some of the largest and heaviest tracked vehicles in the Army's inventory.

Self-described as "dirty," Hodge said at the end of the day her contentment comes from knowing she completed a task which enables her unit's mission to operate seamlessly.

"It's the satisfaction that I fixed something, and it's running because of me," she said. "My hands get really tore up here, but who cares about the little things. It's about completing the mission and getting these tracks running again."

With long days and working into the early-evening hours, Hodge admits the work is monotonous and difficult.

"It's tough sometimes to go out there everyday, but I work with good people so it's kind of fun," she said. "We are doing the same thing over and over again - every day. The thing



Pfc. Eva Hodge, 69th Chemical Co., 1st Armored Division, works on a tracked vehicle engine.

that keeps me going out there is the guys I work with.

"No matter the situation, Hodge said her family of six "Yankees" or track mechanics makes the days go by as they slowly inch toward their redeployment back to Germany.

"It's boring," she said about the thought of working in an office. "I just can't sit inside all day and do nothing. I need to be working with my hands. A lot of people tell us we are crazy and that we do crazy things, but you need to be a little crazy to be out here everyday on these tracks."

Scheduled to re-deploy in early spring, Hodge said being away from her little brother is the most difficult part of her mission in central Iraq.

"It's funny, he always irritating me, but I miss that now," she said about her 13-year-old brother, Chris.

Hodge said the thing she misses most about her brother is his ability to rewire things. "He always plays these little jokes. He'll rewire the lights in the bathroom and even my car, and he is always upsetting me. But who cares now - I miss him. He thinks I am the coolest sister ever because not too many boys have big sisters in the Army in Iraq."

Hodge said she hopes that someday she can look back and remember the time she spent with her friends and away from family and know that she did her part to make a difference.

Hodge admits the Army is only temporary. "I am going to get out and go to college for business degree," she said. "It's a great thing I am doing here. I am helping the fight on terrorism, something I'll always keep with me."

The Old Ironsides Report

February 6, 2004

News...

CIA Boss: Iraq Not Called Imminent Threat

WASHINGTON (AP) - In his first public defense of prewar intelligence, CIA Director George Tenet said Thursday that U.S. analysts had never claimed Iraq was an imminent threat, the main argument used by President Bush for going to war. Tenet said analysts had varying opinions on the state of Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs and those differences were spelled out in the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate given to the White House. That report summarized intelligence on Iraq's weapons programs.

Pakistan President Pardons Nuke Scientist

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) - President Gen. Pervez Musharraf pardoned the father of Pakistan's nuclear program Thursday for giving technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea. The Pakistani leader's pardon headed off a showdown with the political and religious groups which strongly opposed punishment for Abdul Qadeer Khan.

Dean Says Wisconsin Will Be His Test

Howard Dean told supporters Thursday he will be out of the race for the Democratic nomination for president if he fails to win the Wisconsin primary, declaring "all that you have worked for these past months is on the line on a single day, in a single state."

Mass. Lawmakers Mull Gay Marriage Ruling

BOSTON (AP) - Legislators opposed to gay marriage are planning ways to circumvent the ruling by the state's highest court that paves the way for same-sex marriages as early as May. "The court has overstepped its boundary and has not let the legislative process to unfold the way it has on other issues," said Rep. Eugene O'Flaherty.

Workers' Productivity Slows at End of '03

WASHINGTON (AP) - The productivity of America's workers slowed in the final three months of 2003, advancing at a 2.7 percent annual rate - a still respectable pace that bodes well for the economy's strengthening recovery. The increase came after productivity - the amount an employee produces per hour of work - rocketed at a 9.5 percent rate in the third quarter, the Labor Department reported Thursday.

In other news...

3 Accused of Putting Hairpieces on Cows

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) -- Three livestock exhibitors at last year's Ohio State Fair have been disqualified for allegedly outfitting their Holstein cows with hairpieces.

State Fair inspectors said the three glued or painted hair from another part of the animal or from another animal to create straighter backs on the cows and enhance their appearance in the show ring.

Kreg Krebs and his brother Kenneth of Fredericksburg, and Scott Long of Clayton, Mich., could be required to forfeit all winnings, said Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Melanie Wilt. The winnings had been withheld by fair officials.

Wilt said state inspectors at the fair discovered the fake hair when the cows were leaving the show ring on Aug. 10.

The men have 30 days to request a hearing in which they could present their cases to an independent hearing officer.

Aussie TV Sorry for Expletives on Show

LONDON (AP) -- Former Sex Pistols singer John Lydon - who let fly with a string of expletives on a live celebrity reality TV show - walked off the set Thursday.

Early morning viewers of "I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!" saw Lydon, formerly known as Johnny Rotten, hug his fellow contestants before walking off the set in the Australian rain forest.

His departure came just hours after ITV producers gave the 47-year-old a dressing down for swearing on a live segment of the popular program that is being followed by about 10 million Britons each night.

ITV bosses imposed a time delay Wednesday after the outburst of bad language from Lydon when he was told that the public had voted to keep him in the show.

"He has been fantastic entertainment on the show and viewers and his fellow celebrities have found him to be an endearing, eccentric and sensitive character," ITV said. "We respect his decision to quit and hope we haven't seen the last of him."

The show strands C-list celebs in the Australian rain forest, subjects them to a series of unpalatable trials involving spiders and snakes, and allows the public to vote them off the show one by one. Lydon earlier successfully completed a task of grabbing 10 stars from a pen full of hungry, pecking ostriches to win food for his fellow contestants.

Chaplain's thought for the day...

Moral Compass

There's harmony and inner peace to be found in following a moral compass that points in the same direction regardless of fashion or trend.

--Ted Koppel

The Old Ironsides Report

February 6, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 06, 2004

As of: Thursday, February 05, 2004 9:02:43 PM

Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00			KEN BURNS' HISTORY OF JAZZ - THE GIFT, 1917-1924	TODAY		00:00
00:30		HEADLINE NEWS			ARMY NEWSWATCH	00:30
01:00		TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO	4 LITTLE GIRLS		LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
02:00	SPORTSCENTER	THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN		SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30					NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00		COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC (WOMEN'S): CONNECTICUT @ TENNESSEE	ROCKET POWER : - ALOHA KID	TELETUBBIES : - PLAYING BALL	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30	NBA - LOS ANGELES LAKERS @ PHILADELPHIA 76ERS		THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS : - THE CALL OF THE SIMPSONS	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	CNBC: THE NEWS	04:00
04:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - SLUMBER PARTY			04:30
05:00		COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: DUKE @ NORTH CAROLINA	CHARMED : - LUCKY CHARMED	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
06:00	NBA - SAN ANTONIO SPURS @ SEATTLE SUPERSONICS		THE X-FILES : - GENDERBENDER	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWSHOUR	06:00
06:30				JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00		HEADLINE NEWS	SAVAGE SEAS : - KILLER STORMS	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30		ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00		HEADLINE NEWS	THE LIFE OF MAMMALS		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30	INSIDE THE NBA	HEADLINE NEWS				08:30
09:00	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	SESAME STREET	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - I WAS MADE TO LOVE YOU	CALILOU : - WINTER	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30	NHL 2NIGHT			ALL GROWN UP : - SUSIE SINGS THE BLUES		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	TELETUBBIES : - PLAYING BALL	IRON CHEF : - SOY BEAN/CHEN VS YOSHIE TOBE	KIM POSSIBLE (TV-7): - OCTOBER 31ST	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TV-7): - RAGGEDY ANDROID/CLASS ACTION		10:30
11:00	ROME IS BURNING	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	ROCKET POWER : - ALOHA KID	JEOPARDY!	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - WCC: PEPPERDINE @ GONZAGA		THE SIMPSONS : - THE CALL OF THE SIMPSONS	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - SLUMBER PARTY	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00			CHARMED : - LUCKY CHARMED	THE SIMPSONS : - TREEHOUSE OF HORROR XIV	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
13:30				THAT 70'S SHOW : - WHOLE LOTTA LOVE		13:30
14:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	THE X-FILES : - GENDERBENDER	SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS	PRIMETIME	14:00
14:30		JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: DUKE @ NORTH CAROLINA	TODAY	SAVAGE SEAS : - KILLER STORMS	24 : - DAY 2: 12:00 MIDNIGHT - 1:00 A.M.	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00			THE LIFE OF MAMMALS	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00	NHL - DETROIT RED WINGS @ COLORADO AVALANCHE	LIVE WITH REGIS & KELLY WEDDING SPECIAL	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - I WAS MADE TO LOVE YOU		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30				THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00		KIM POSSIBLE (TV-7): - OCTOBER 31ST	IRON CHEF : - SOY BEAN/CHEN VS YOSHIE TOBE		THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30		MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TV-7): - RAGGEDY ANDROID/CLASS ACTION		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	ROCKET POWER : - ALOHA KID	MEN IN BLACK		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS			19:30
20:00	AROUND THE HORN	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - THE CALL OF THE SIMPSONS		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	HEADLINE NEWS	THE COSBY SHOW : - SLUMBER PARTY			20:30
21:00	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - PAC-10: ARIZONA @ CALIFORNIA	THE SIMPSONS : - TREEHOUSE OF HORROR XIV	CHARMED : - LUCKY CHARMED	HARRIET THE SPY	PRIMETIME	21:00
21:30		THAT 70'S SHOW : - WHOLE LOTTA LOVE				21:30
22:00		SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS	THE X-FILES : - GENDERBENDER		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00	PGA TOUR - AT&T PEBBLE BEACH PRO-AM: SECOND ROUND	24 : - DAY 2: 12:00 MIDNIGHT - 1:00 A.M.	SAVAGE SEAS : - KILLER STORMS	TODAY	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30					INSIDE POLITICS	23:30

Today in history: Feb. 5

1985: The "Reagan Doctrine" is announced

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) In his State of the Union address, President Ronald Reagan defines some of the key concepts of his foreign policy, establishing what comes to be known as the "Reagan Doctrine." The doctrine served as the foundation for the Reagan administration's support of "freedom fighters" around the globe.

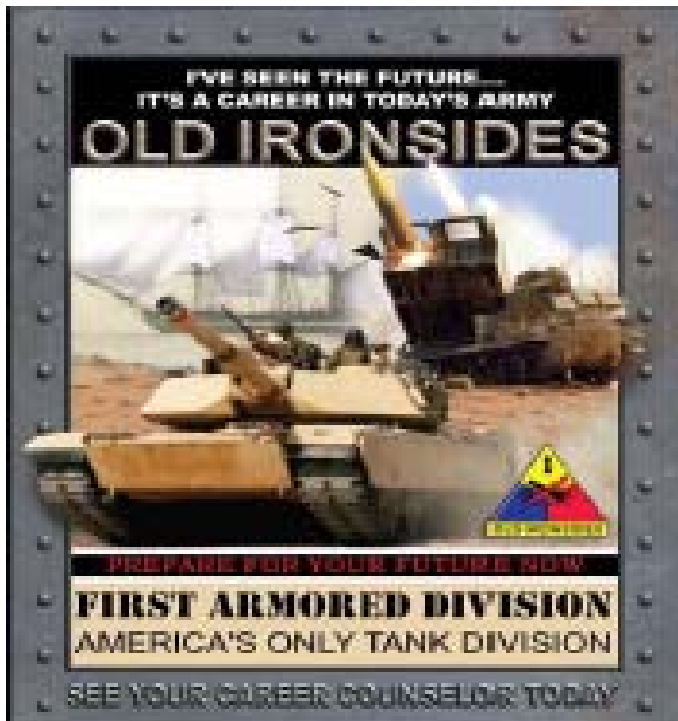
Reagan began his foreign policy comments with the dramatic pronouncement that, "Freedom is not the sole prerogative of a chosen few; it is the universal right of all God's children." America's "mission" was to "nourish and defend freedom and democracy." More specifically, Reagan declared that, "We must stand by our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives-on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua-to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth." He concluded, "Support for freedom fighters is self-defense."

With these words, the Reagan administration laid the foundation for its program of military assistance to "freedom fighters." In action, this policy translated into covertly supporting the Contras in their attacks on the leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua; the Afghan rebels in their fight against the Soviet occupiers; and anticommunist Angolan forces embroiled in that nation's civil war.

President Reagan continued to defend his actions throughout his two terms in office.

During his farewell address in 1989, he claimed success in weakening the Sandinista government, forcing the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan, and bringing an end to the conflict in Angola.

Domestic critics, however, decried his actions, claiming that the support of so-called "freedom fighters" resulted only in prolonging and escalating bloody conflicts and in U.S. support of repressive and undemocratic elements in each of the respective nations.



Reenlistment Bonus Still Available

The Army keeps rewarding soldiers with cash for reenlisting while deployed. Task Force 1st Armored Division soldiers with less than 10 years of service can earn from \$5,000 to \$10,000 when they reenlist.

Soldiers must reenlist for 36 months. Other factors that will determine the bonus amount include years of service and current pay grade.

For more information contact your career counselor:

- Command Career Counselor: SGM James Jaranowski, 551-9405
- Retention Operations NCO: MSG Gary Schoolfield, 551-9405
- 1st Brigade: SFC Burke, Martyrs' Monument, 550-7027
- 2nd Brigade: SSG Gibson, Presidential Palace, 551-2010
- 4th Brigade: MSG Wolfe, 551-6620